

middle of the spongy portion, for which dilatation, fairly tried, has proved unsuccessful.

"It is useful, also, in some few cases of stricture situated at the bulbous portion, which are not relievable by dilatation; a single incision, which is not deep, being free from danger, and frequently rendering the stricture perfectly amenable to dilatation afterwards.

"Lastly, it is so in those rare cases in which the urethra is narrowed and indurated at many points, or throughout a great portion of its course, dilatation having been found inefficient."

The historical portion of the chapter upon external incisions has been much enlarged. We notice that to Jean Luis Petit is accorded the credit of having first performed a cutting operation for the cure of the stricture, and not for the mere relief of a complication. This was first shown, if our memory serves us, in a paper on Syme's operation, in the *Archives Générales*, by M. Follin. Mr. Thompson has made it his business to write to every surgeon who has performed the operation, and has collected a list of 219 cases by thirty operators. In this list "the total number of deaths occurring within two or three months after the operation, whether due to it or not, is fifteen. One, certainly—two, I think—fairly were not chargeable to it; leaving say fourteen, or slightly over six per cent. But four others were the subjects of advanced disease of the kidneys, and therefore ought never to have undergone the operation, and with our present experience would not have been submitted to it." The mode of performing the operation is much more carefully described in this new edition.

In the treatment of retention of urine depending on stricture, Mr. Thompson in his first edition recommended the employment of chloroform. In this one he speaks of its benefit with still greater confidence and satisfaction. Sometimes, after the ablest hands have failed to pass an instrument, the urine has been spontaneously expelled when the patient was fully subject to its influence.

The chapter upon urinary abscess and fistulæ has been more improved than any in the work. A very proper division of fistulæ is made into simple, indurated, and fistulæ with loss of substance. The cure of the last form of fistulæ—in other words, the subject of urethroplasty—entirely neglected in the first edition, is now treated of at considerable length.

The chapter upon stricture of the female urethra is the same.

We must therefore look upon the changes made by Mr. Thompson in this work—the best of all that treat of stricture—as enhancing considerably its value.

In his preface to this second edition Mr. Thompson states that the most flattering appreciation of his labours was that which appeared in the appropriation of thirty pages of the second chapter by a foreign surgeon, first pointed out in a review of the *Treatise on Stricture*, by Henry Smith, in the number of this Journal for April last. He adds "that it would be impossible for the author to omit this opportunity of presenting his sincere and cordial thanks to the press of this country, of France, and of America (in the latter the fraud was first discovered and exposed), for the prompt and complete manner in which it hastened to lay bare and publish to the world the fraud in question." It is somewhat remarkable that this should be the first public acknowledgment made in England of the fact that this remarkable plagiarism was first pointed out in this country. British reviewers have tried to make it appear that the discovery of this plagiarism was the result of the very extensive acquaintance of English surgeons with continental medical literature.

W. F. A.

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ART. XXV.—*Eutherapeia; or, an Examination of the Principles of Medical Science, with Researches in the Nervous System.* By ROBERT GARNER, Surgeon to the North Staffordshire Infirmary, etc., late President of the North Staffordshire Medical Society, author of Papers in the Linnæan and Zoological Transactions, and of the Natural History of Stafford. London: John Churchill.

It would seem from the appendages to the author's name on the title page, and from one of the chapters in his book, that he has been devoted to a consider-

able extent to researches in comparative anatomy and natural history; and we infer from what is said in his preface that he, in common with many others in our profession, has had his practice lessened on account of these researches, although they are certainly tributary to a knowledge of practical medicine, and the physician who pursues them in his leisure hours adds to his resources in the investigation and treatment of disease. It seems that in England as well as this country it is almost always injurious to a physician's standing with the public as a practitioner, to be known to be engaged in any investigations which have not the most palpable and direct bearing upon his practice. Those generally have the largest practice who are careful to be known only as practitioners of medicine—the idea of the public being that they are so much engrossed in their practice, that they have neither the time nor the inclination to attend to anything else. In many communities such an impression is so essential to success, that it is the general aim of the young physicians to produce it in regard to themselves, before they really have business enough to occupy more than a very small proportion of their time. And we have no doubt that it is good policy ordinarily for one who wishes to push his researches into studies that have not a palpable bearing on the treatment of disease, to conceal the fact that he does so from the great body of his employers. If he does not, they will get the impression that he has so little practice that he has time to attend to other matters, and will think that he is so much interested in them that he will not take a proper interest in his patients. The truth is, that the investigations referred to really make one a better practitioner, not only by adding to his resources, but also by giving him an agreeable relaxation from the toils of practice, thus adding both to the buoyancy and the vigour of his intellect. The physician who confines himself wholly to the drudgery of practice, going through the same routine day after day, both narrows and belittles his mental powers. And he who pretends to do this as a matter of policy, and going about with bustling air, really spends little of thought upon anything, though the world may be cheated into the opinion that he is very skilful, is really but little above the veriest quack that he affects to look upon with such holy horror.

But to the book that we have in hand. It has a singular title, and is somewhat singular in its character. The chief object of the author, as he states it in his preface, is “to demonstrate that considerable reliance may be placed upon the present theories and practice of medicine, bearing in mind, however, that more light remains to be shed on very many medical subjects, and that all human opinions and doctrines are liable to error.” In order to do this, he attempts to give a picture of the state of medicine at the present time.

While there are many good things in the book, regarding the book as a whole it is a failure. All the parts of it do not contribute to the end aimed at. The best chapter in the book has the least practical bearing upon the object for which the author writes. In this chapter he gives us an admirable view of what is known of the comparative anatomy and physiology of the nervous system, and we have no doubt that he could write an extended treatise on this subject which would be of great value. It is a subject on which he is evidently at home. The next chapter also, which is on “Physiological and Pathological Chemistry, or Chemistry in connection with the Functions, Changes, and Diseases of our Bodies,” is marked by comprehensive views and an intimate knowledge of all the minutiae of the subject.

In the next two chapters he undertakes to give a sort of running account of what we know at the present time of the nature and treatment of diseases. He goes over too much ground, in too general a way, to give the reader much definite information. The style in which he does it is dashing and off hand, and it would seem that sometimes he hardly is aware of exactly what he is saying. It is on this supposition only that we can account for some passages that occur. For example, he says, “Asthma appears to be a purely spasmodic disease, attendant on some peculiar conformation of the chest, or lungs, or breast.” Now he cannot mean that it is either universally or generally attendant upon such conformation, and yet he says so in effect. In noticing delirium tremens, he speaks of there being an alcoholic poison in the blood, and of ridding the system of it by brisk purgatives as one great object in the treatment of it.

Chapter 6, "On Medicinal Agents and their Classification," is a short one, and contains nothing worthy of special notice.

Chapter 7, is "On the Divine Dispensation in Disease." There is much that is valuable and interesting in it, but we do not see that it is exactly pertinent to the avowed object of the book. Indeed, there is much in the volume that gives it, as we may say, a patchwork character.

We are much surprised at one opinion which the author expresses. He says of cancer, encephaloid tubercle, and melanosis, that "it is questionable whether the plan of treatment pursued by the quack with these latter is not sometimes the most efficacious, destroying their vitality by powerful escharotics, and causing them to drop out, rather than our method of extirpation by the knife."

In the last chapter, which is on pseudo-medical science, some effectual blows are dealt upon phrenology, mesmerism, hydropathy, and homœopathy. We will give one or two specimens of his mode of treating the last named delusion:—

"To show nature's want of curative power, Hahnemann, most unhappily for himself, points out that 'it cannot bring together the gaping lips of a wound, and by their union effect a cure; it knows not how to straighten and adjust the broken ends of a bone; it cannot put a ligature on a wounded artery, but in its energy it causes the patient to bleed to death.' No, nor can it convey our meat and drink to our lips without our own mechanical effort. In the above instances, we see manifested, in a manner that in all ages has obtained the admiration of mankind, the consummate skill of nature. No, Hahnemann, we cannot give up this principle for your dogma; and you above all others ought not to require it, for without the *vis medicatrix nature*, what would your treatment be?"

It is thus that he brings the experience of the profession to bear as a full battery upon the exclusiveness of Hahnemannism. "We do not think it 'contrary to nature' to seek to cure disease by an open combat with it, by what Hahnemann terms antagonistic measures; so far holding the ancient maxim, *contraria contrariis sunt remedia*. We apply cold to the hot head or skin in a frenzy or fever; a warm bath when the perspiration has been suppressed; we bleed in plethora or inflammation, and thus destroy the *pabulum* of disease, or in hemorrhage, to take off, by mechanical means, the *vis à tergo*; we give an alkali by a chemical law to neutralize the acid which may be proved to be present; purgatives in constipations; astringents in hemorrhage or diarrhœa; koussou in tape-worm; all wrong, according to Hahnemann. We have found that we can *cilâ, tutê et jucundè* relieve a colic by a carminative; a syncope by ammonia; by a spasm by an opiate; or a gastralgia by a dose of brandy; and we adopt such methods, though they are deprecated by Hahnemann, as merely palliatives. In fact, we adhere to no dogma, neither the one given above, nor the opposite one of the homœopaths, viz., 'like cures like;' we avail ourselves of various laws and principles—our remedies may be vital, chemical, or mechanical; specific, derivative, or counter-irritant; diverse enough, at any rate, to prove that we are less systemists than the homœopaths themselves; a point on which they attack us."

W. H.

ART. XXVI.—*Etudes sur la Monorchidie et la Cryptorchidie chez l'Homme.*

Par M. ERNEST GODARD, Interne des Hôpitaux de Paris, Membre de la Société de Biologie et de la Société Anatomique. Extrait des Mémoires de la Société de Biologie, année 1856. Paris, 1857. Octavo, pp. 164.

IN a recent number of this Journal (that for April, 1858), the last volume of the published minutes and memoirs of the Biological Society of Paris was briefly noticed. Attention was then called particularly to the great variety of subjects, in the study of which the members of that active society were engaged. It is an error, but a very common one, so much so that we feel called upon to refer to it, to suppose that the field allotted to the biologist in the domain of science is one of narrow limits. This error arises from a prevailing notion that when there is no longer life in an object, it is no longer an object for study to the biologist; and again, that any departure from the normal condition of things places a living